

MONO COUNTY RTP/GENERAL PLAN UPDATE DRAFT EIR**SECTION 2.0****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

2.0 PURPOSES OF THIS DRAFT EIR

The County of Mono, as Lead Agency, determined that the 2015 *RTP/General Plan Update* is a 'project' as defined in the CEQA Guidelines, and requires the preparation of an EIR. In compliance with CEQA, this Draft EIR has been prepared to analyze the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the project. The EIR has been prepared to fully inform decision-makers in the county, responsible and trustee agencies, interested organizations and the general public of the potential environmental consequences associated with approval and implementation of the Draft *RTP/General Plan Update*. A detailed description of the proposed project, including the project setting, project components and characteristics, project objectives, discretionary actions, and how the EIR will be used, is provided in EIR §3.0 (Project Description).

2.1 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

This Draft EIR addresses the full range of potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed *RTP/General Plan Update* that are known to the county, were raised in comments on the Notice of EIR Preparation (NOP) scoping process, or were raised during preparation of the Draft EIR. During the NOP process, three comment letters were received from interested agencies (Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and California Department of Transportation). The comments are summarized in EIR §1.0 (Introduction) and provided in EIR Appendix B. Significant effects identified in this EIR include impacts pertaining to biological resources, soils and geology, health and safety hazards, cultural resources, hydrology, recreation, aesthetics, and public services. Although the residents and communities of Mono County hold a wide range of goals for long-range planning (as identified throughout this EIR), the *RTP/General Plan Update* has been a community-based process, and there are no known unresolved issues or areas of controversy at the time of this Draft EIR release for public review.

2.2 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or to the location of the project that would reduce or avoid significant impacts, and that could feasibly accomplish the basic objectives of the proposed project. EIR §6 (Alternatives) identifies two alternatives that were rejected from detailed consideration (one pertaining to water reclamation, and one pertaining to transportation) as well as three alternatives that were analyzed and compared to the project as proposed, including:

- Alternative 1: No Project Alternative. Under Alternative 1, the County would not adopt the Draft *RTP/General Plan Update*. The existing 2001 Mono County *General Plan* (all elements) and the 2008 RTP (with 2013 updates) would continue to be implemented as at present, and no changes or other planning initiatives would occur until subsequent proposals are formulated, evaluated under CEQA, and considered for approval by the Mono County Board of Supervisors and other responsible and trustee agencies.
- Alternative 2: Compact Development Alternative. Both the existing and the proposed *RTP/General Plan Update* reflect a long-standing priority of Mono County to direct growth to existing communities. Opportunities remain

that would enable this goal to be more fully realized. Alternative 2 considers a series of steps that would curtail development outside of community areas through increased minimum acreage requirements for subdivisions, agricultural lands and other similar uses, and through higher development density allocations within defined community boundaries.

- Alternative 3: Proactive Resource and Biological Policy Alternative. During the course of the *RTP/General Plan* update, the county considered a wide range of potential policies for each of the General Plan Elements. The County ultimately recommended policies for each *General Plan Element* based on an assessment of their ability to feasibly achieve the stated project objectives. At the same time, it was recognized that some of the excluded policies had substantial merit, and warranted consideration. Alternative 3 presents and describes policies for resource efficiency and biological conservation that were considered and found meritorious but ultimately not recommended due to potential infeasibility.

EIR §6 provides, in Table 6-2, a comparative analysis of the proposed project and each of the three analyzed project alternatives. The comparison uses a numerical scoring system to assess how each alternative compares to the proposed project in terms of meeting project objectives and avoiding or minimizing potentially significant impacts. Scoring provided in Table 6-2 indicates that No Project Alternative would be least effective at meeting project objectives and least effective at avoiding or reducing significant effects. Alternative 2, the 'compact development alternative,' would be environmentally superior to the proposed project. Alternative 3 would also be environmentally superior to the proposed project, though to a lesser degree than Alternative 2. Alternatives 2 and 3 are not recommended at the present time, however, because the underlying concepts were not presented to the community RPACs for discussion during development of the draft General Plan and were not among the land use scenarios developed by the RPACs for consideration in the current update. This EIR recommends that the county present the concepts underlying Alternatives 2 and 3 for future discussion among RPAC and community planning groups. If the discussions indicate that these changes are broadly supported, it is recommended that the County incorporate the revisions in a future General Plan amendment.

2.3 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This EIR focuses on the significant environmental effects of the proposed *RTP/General Plan Update*, in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines. The CEQA Guidelines defines a significant effect as a substantial adverse change in the physical conditions which exist in the area affected by the proposed project. A less than significant effect is one in which there is no long or short-term significant adverse change in environmental conditions. The environmental impacts of the proposed project, the impact level of significance prior to mitigation, the proposed mitigation measures to mitigate an impact, and the impact level of significance after mitigation are summarized in Table 2-1.

TABLE 2-1: Executive Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures			
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE WITHOUT MITIGATION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
§4.1 LAND USE AND PLANNING			
4.1(a) Physically divide an established community	Less than Significant	Mitigated to the greatest feasible extent through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigation measures are recommended.	Less than Significant
4.1(b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to the greatest feasible extent through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigation measures are recommended.	Less than Significant
§4.2 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND CIRCULATION			
4.2(a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation and all relevant components of the circulation system.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to the feasible extent through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigation measures are recommended.	Less than Significant
4.2(b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to the feasible extent through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigation measures are recommended.	Less than Significant
4.2(c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks.	No Impact	Mitigated to the feasible extent through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigation measures are recommended.	No Impact
4.2(d) Result in inadequate emergency access or design hazards.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to the feasible extent through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigation measures are recommended.	Less than Significant
4.2(e) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs for public transit, bicycle, parking/pedestrian facilities, or decrease safety or performance of such facilities.	No Impact	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	No Impact

§4.3 AIR QUALITY, CLIMATE CHANGE, GHG EMISSIONS			
4.3(a) Conflicts with or obstructs implementation of the air quality plan or results in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant for which the region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.3(b) Violates an air quality standard or contributes substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.3(c) Exposes sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.3(d) Creates objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.	Less than Significant	Impacts reduced through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. Supplemental recommended mitigations include: 1. <i>Among the critical next steps for consideration of a biomass facility at Mammoth Mountain garage, it is recommended that the county work with the biomass team to develop a tight management plan for on-site wood chip storage and handling as a way to avoid serious odor problems and spontaneous wood pile combustion.</i> 2. <i>As one of the critical next steps, it is recommended that the county work with the biomass team to determine the distance and locational relationship between the garage site and nearby residences (or other potentially sensitive uses) with the specific goal of verifying that the distances and conditions (wind, access, noise) are not conducive to future neighborhood complaints about odors.</i>	Less than Significant
4.3(e) Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment or conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
§4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
4.4(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, directly or through habitat modifications, on a candidate, sensitive, or special status species as identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable

4.4(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on a riparian habitat or sensitive natural plant community identified in local/regional policies, regulations, by CDFW or USFWS?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.4(c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as per Clean Water Act §404 (marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through removal, filling, hydrological interruption, other means?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.4(d) Interfere substantially with the movement of a native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede use of native wildlife nurseries?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.4(e) Conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.4(f) Conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved habitat conservation plan?	No Impact	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	No Impact
§4.5. GEOLOGY, SOILS, MINERALS			
4.5(a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving: i) Rupture of a known Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault as delineated by the State Geologist or based on other substantial evidence? ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? iv) Landslides?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.5(b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.5(c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse, or be located on expansive soil creating substantial risks to life or property?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.5(d) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant

4.5(e) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or an identified locally important mineral resource that would be of value to the region and to residents of the state of California?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
§4.5. PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY, HAZARDS, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
4.6(a) Create a hazard to the public or environment through routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials, or release of hazardous materials into the environment, including within 1/4 mile of a school?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.6(b) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to CGC §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.6(c) Create a safety hazard for people residing or working in an area located in an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport or private airstrip?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.6(d) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.6(e) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.6(f) Expose people or structures to significant risk of avalanche, landslides, destructive storms or winds, rockfall or volcanic activity?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
§4.7. CULTURAL RESOURCES			
4.7(a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a prehistorical or historical resource?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.7(b) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.7(c) Disturb any human remains or sacred lands, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
§4.8. HYDROLOGY, FLOODING, WATER QUALITY, WATER SUPPLY			

4.8(a) Violate any water quality standards?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.8(b) Violate wastewater treatment or discharge requirements or require new wastewater treatment facilities?	Potentially Significant	Impacts reduced through RTP/General Plan Policies and Actions. Supplemental recommended mitigation includes: <i>1. It is recommended that the County formalize policies consistent with LRWQCB recommendations for controlling the problems associated with septic systems including (a) reevaluate and update the adequacy of existing local regulations for installation and maintenance of septic systems, including applicable criteria from Basin Plan Appendix C; (b) continue to limit the use of septic systems on small-lot, higher density developments; (c) encourage alternative waste treatment systems; (d) encourage & support funding for wastewater treatment plants in outlying areas where water quality problems and/or population density require wastewater collection and treatment.</i>	Significant and Unavoidable
4.8(c) Have insufficient groundwater or surface water supplies to sustainably serve General Plan land uses from existing entitlements, facilities and resources?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.8(d) Alter existing drainage patterns causing substantial erosion, siltation, flooding, polluted runoff?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.8(e) Place housing or structures in a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood delineation map?	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.8(f) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.8(g) Expose people or structures to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
§4.9. RECREATION			
4.9(a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant

physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			
4.9(b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
§4.10. AESTHETICS, LIGHT & GLARE, SCENIC RESOURCES			
4.10(a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or scenic including trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.10(b) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
4.10(c) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views?	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable
§4.11. AGRICULTURE, FORESTS, CONSERVATION			
4.11(a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to nonagricultural use, or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.11(b) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
§4.12. POPULATION AND HOUSING			
4.12(a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	No Impact	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	No Impact
4.12(b) Displace substantial numbers of people or existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	No Impact	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	No Impact
§4.13. PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES			
4.13(a) Create a need for new or modified governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the	Potentially Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Significant and Unavoidable

public services: Police protection, Schools, Other public facilities, services and utilities?			
4.13(b) Result in a wasteful, inefficient, and/or unnecessary consumption of energy?	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.13(c) Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs and comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
§4.14. NOISE			
4.14(a) Expose persons to or cause a permanent or temporary significant increase in ambient noise levels or result in noise levels exceeding standards set by the general plan or noise ordinance or other applicable standards.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.14(b) Expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
4.14(c) Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels for a project located in an airport land use plan or (where such a plan has not been adopted) within two miles of a public airport or public use airport or a private airstrip.	Less than Significant	Mitigated to extent feasible through proposed Policies and Actions. No supplemental mitigations recommended.	Less than Significant
OTHER CEQA TOPICS			
Cumulative Impacts on Agriculture associated with Walker River Water Transfer Program	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in forthcoming EIR for Walker River Water Transfer Project Proposal.	To be determined through future EIR
Cumulative Impacts on Aesthetic and Scenic Values associated with Walker River Water Transfer Program	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in forthcoming EIR for Walker River Water Transfer Project Proposal.	To be determined through future EIR
Cumulative Impacts on Biological Resources associated with Walker River Water Transfer Program	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in forthcoming EIR for Walker River Water Transfer Project Proposal.	To be determined through future EIR
Cumulative Impacts on Cultural Resources associated with Walker River Water Transfer Program	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in forthcoming EIR for	To be determined through future EIR

		Walker River Water Transfer Project Proposal.	
Cumulative Impacts on Hydrology and Water Quality associated with Walker River Water Transfer Program	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in forthcoming EIR for Walker River Water Transfer Project Proposal.	To be determined through future EIR
Cumulative Impacts on Land Use and Planning Associated with Walker River Water Transfer Program	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in forthcoming EIR for Walker River Water Transfer Project Proposal.	To be determined through future EIR
Cumulative Impacts on Recreation Associated with Walker River Water Transfer Program	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in forthcoming EIR for Walker River Water Transfer Project Proposal.	To be determined through future EIR
Cumulative Impacts associated with Water Reclamation	Potentially Significant and Adverse	No Water Reclamation projects proposed at this time.	To be determined through CEQA analysis when and if proposed.
Cumulative Impacts associated with Landfill Closure	Potentially Significant and Adverse	Will be mitigated to extent feasible through measures proposed in EIR for Benton Regional Landfill Closure and Replacement Project.	To be determined through CEQA analysis when replacement site is proposed.